The Nation's Gratitude.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE

United States General Hospital,

OFFICERS' DIVISION,

NEAR FORT MONROE, VA.,

ON

THE NATIONAL THANKSGIVING DAY,

November 24th, 1864.

By REV. JAMES MARSHALL,

Chaplain, U. S. A.

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PROCLAMATION.

It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our National life another year, defending us with His guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad, and vouchsafing to us in his mercy, many and signal victories over the enemy who is of our own household. It has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in their camps and our sailors on the seas with unusual health. He has largely augmented our free population by emancipation and by immigration, while He has opened to us new sources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our working men in every department of industry with abundant reward. Moreover, He has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage, and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war, into which we have been brought by our adherence as a nation to the cause of freedom and humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions.

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart the last Thursday in November next, as a day which I desire to be observed by all my fellow-citizens, wherever they may then be, as a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the universe; and I do further recommend to my fellow-citizens aforesaid, that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust, and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers and supplications to the Great Disposer of events for a return of the inestimable blessings of peace, union, and harmony throughout the land which it has pleased Him to assign as a dwelling place for ourselves and our posterity throughout all generations.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this 20th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1864, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:

WM. H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

CHESAPEAKE HOSPITAL,
Fortress Monroe, Va., Dec. 5th, 1864.

REV. JAMES MARSHALL,
Chaplain of Hospital.

SIR:—The undersigned officers and patients in this Hospital, highly appreciating the sermon delivered by you on the 24th of November, the annual National Thanksgiving, and repeated by special request on the Sabbath evening of December 4th, respectfully ask the manuscript for publication; believing as we do that its wider dissemination in the army will be promotive of patriotism, manhood, and religion.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient Servants,

J. B. KIDDOO,
Colonel 22d United States Colored Troops.
H. BOYNTON,
Colonel 8th Maine Volunteers.
O. L. MANN,
Lieut.-Col. 39th Illinois Volunteers.
J. B. COOK,
Lieut.-Col. 5th United States Colored Troops,
D. B. DEVENDORF,
Surgeon 19th Wisconsin Volunteers.
D. R. BROWER,
Assistant-Surgeon United States Volunteers.
G. W. DEWEY,
Acting-Assistant-Surgeon United States Army.
W. H. WALLING,
Lieutenant 142d New York Volunteers.
GEO. M. CHASE,
Lieutenant, Signal Officer.
J. M. DUDLEY,
Lieutenant 25th United States Colored Troops.
CHAS. WOODS,
Hospital Steward, United States Army.
WILLARD RICHARDSON,
Chaplain 89th New York Volunteers.
REV. W. L. TISDALE,
Agent at Fort Monroe of United States Christian Commission.

REPLY.

U. S. GENERAL HOSPITAL, OFFICERS' DIVISION,
Fortress Monroe, Dec. 5th, 1864.

TO COL. J. B. KIDDOO, AND OTHERS.

GENTLEMEN:—Accept my sincere thanks for your kind expressions. I submit to your judgment, and transmit the manuscript you request.

Let me also, through you, thank MR. PAYSON of Boston, who is with us but temporarily, and assure him that many will always remember him most gratefully for his kind offices in behalf of the temporal and spiritual welfare of our soldiers, and for his most generous and voluntary gift of funds to print, for general distribution, this discourse which you and he have done me the honor to request for publication.

Very respectfully,
JAMES MARSHALL.

SERMON.

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High."
PSALMS l., 14.

SOME one has called the course of Divine Providence towards the saints as revealed in the Psalms, the great music-book of God's children, on every leaf of which is a song that finds response in every penitent soul. The heart-keys are both sad and joyous. Sighing and singing,—handmaids in trial and triumph,—are joined in sympathy and praise. After death smites, we pray,—after life restored, saved, we praise. So true sorrow is mingled with feeling of joy. Music over the floods of affliction, like music over the waters, is always the sweetest.

Nations, as individuals, love David's music-book: so truthfully it traces the lessons of Providence. Over the gulf of centuries sound the wails of the Jewish captives, sitting in grief on Babylon's willowy river-banks, and, with harps unstrung, refusing to sing Zion's songs in a strange land. Our own loved land has long had its river-banks strung with mourning captives, with harps silent and enshrouded, waiting for transfer to freedom. Hope disciplines to trust and wait. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly." "Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me." "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth." The divine promise cheers and directs to praise when afflictions deep, enshroud us. Praising supplants mourning; garments of gladness displace sackcloth of woe. God's word and providence reveal the light in

the clouds; they call us to grateful prayer. The Bible abounds with exhortations to thanksgiving,—the natural expression of the human heart for escape from impending calamities, or successful endurance of trials imposed. Heart-burdens lift like the clouds from the earth, through the buoyant and ennobling influence of humbly acknowledging mercies received. Sighs become praises; mourning tears, joyous orbs. Thanksgiving sends the soul heavenward, as the morning light lifts the lark, soaring and singing its matin of praise. The outgushing thanks of intelligent spirits are earth-notes, whose echoes over the river of life the angels take up and prolong in the home of the redeemed.

When Joshua conquered an ancient city, he caused the fact to be engraved upon monuments to signalize the mercy; so should God's mercies be carved in legible characters upon our national heart to-day in gratitude for the Divine care and salvation. On this national festival then, let us write our mercies upon the rock and make personal the text:—"*Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the* Most High." Our spiritual exercises, symbolizing affection, repentance, faith, will become vows performed; our thanks-givings, obligations discharged; our sacrifices, oblations, acceptable to the Being whom we worship; and through all we may devoutly express the inspiration of our theme for this Christian anniversary—

The Nation's Gratitude.

Our noble President and the loyal Governors have called by proclamations the nation to thanksgiving to Almighty God for his mercies for the year just closing. Never did such an annual event dawn upon our country. Never did such a sorrow-cloud send its darkness into our homes; but the gloom is dispelled by the ineffable splendor that gilds it in the light of promise. We have for some years wept at the grave of the nation's Lazarus; but the angel of promise has rolled the stone from the sepulchral door, manifesting the glory of the Lord, and thereby lifting our hearts in

thankful, humble prayer. "Father, we thank thee, that thou hast heard us." Millions to-day will deeply feel this prayer. From Maine to the Pacific—from the Lakes to the Gulf—God's mercies will be traced in His deep and terrible judgments. Something sublime beyond expression in a nation convulsed by revolution thus bending in prayer before God—thus unfolding its gratitude through this civil Sabbath.

We mention but two general reasons for national gratitude.

I. *The signs of a growing religious life.*

1. The first evidence of a higher life infusing our national character, is—*the greater submission of the people to God's will in our trials.* We are learning lessons of high value. Self is merging into sacrifice. The people wear garments of sorrow, they deprecate tumults, they deplore sacrifices, yet they do not so much ignore the fact, that from agitations and wars evolve the necessity of religious sanctions and consolations, hence more humble dependence upon the Righteous Disposer of human events. It has been wisely said, that "Civil wars and tumults are not the greatest evils that befall nations. 'Tis ill that men should kill one another in seditions, tumults, and wars, but 'tis worse to bring men to such misery, weakness and baseness, as to have neither courage nor strength to contend for anything—to have nothing worth defending and to give the name of peace to desolation." These words uttered by an English martyr because of his loyalty to liberty, touch the mainspring of the American heart to-day to make the people thoroughly appreciate the constitutional rights evolved from the English revolutions. Our people love their treasures—their sons and their wealth—yet they willingly sacrifice to see the salvation of God in making America the home for the oppressed where the standard of Christ will rise, bearing aloft the words,—"*Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for, I am God, and there is none else.*" That standard never was so recognized before in this nation. Loyalty to it has caused our troubles—loyalty to it has not only hardened the oppressor's heart, but

delivered our people from their Egyptian fleshpots, led them across the Red Sea of battle, and assured them that they are to be the Moses to interpret and unfold the blessings of God's truth from the national Sinai.

The loyal people have accepted this revolution imposed upon them, as a terrible fact to be carried to its legitimate results. So they willingly struggle and sacrifice for the country to be redeemed from the Pro-Slavery Rebellion. The ballots and bullets have been thrown into the same balance. Grand the decision: The nation shall not perish from one blow of repudiation, nor from gangrenous disease. The programme for deliverance and peace is armed force for armed traitors. Peace will not come by covenanting with evil, but by removing from the Union the cause of its ultimate ruin, if not removed. Let gleaming steel carve out safety from danger, and loyal hearts build up a great nation on righteous law. If coercion of a State be wrong, how great the wrong to submit to have a nation coerced by several States. Quiet submission to robbery of civil immunities by several States IS CRIME. As the rebels will not return to allegiance, so the people say that they will not stifle crime *now*, to make the children suffer its results *hereafter*. So let peace come upon the wings of the storm. Let the tremendous truths marching out from the subsidence of these stormy throes of rebellion be acknowledged as guides to righteous decisions. Then slavery will be abolished, the Constitution will be law supreme, and *all* will be equal before its verdicts. So schooled by trials and decided as to measures and confident under God as to results are the people, that so clear to the world must be these events,—these issues of this struggle,—that they no longer speculate upon this nation becoming, from temporary weakness, the arena of endless discussions and civil wars, but they hope for a nation just and free, whose God is the Lord.

2. The second sign of moral health and patriotic hope, is—*the deeper recognition of Christianity as a living power in our national life.*

Efforts are gathering with moral sanctions to recognize

God in laws and in events touching our history. Reproachfully to us our Constitution does not directly recognize Him by whom governments are ordained. Let us look a moment to its history. The old Confederation failed. In 1787 our fathers assembled to adopt a more perfect law for the whole land. For weeks they tried to settle on a constitution. When about to dissolve in confusion, despairing as to the success of this first experiment in self-government, Dr. Franklin proposed they begin anew by invoking Divine wisdom. Prayer was offered for the first time, debates moved smoothly, and our present Constitution was the result. Its origin was thus baptized in prayer, but its administration has too often yielded to unrighteous construction. Now God's name is omitted in this organic law, yet the common law as decided by our wisest jurists, recognizes the religion of Christ as *that* of the people. Not defined in its operations by statutes as in England, yet Christianity is implied as against the great false religious systems;—Heathenism, Mohammedanism, Mormonism. We might show, with time, wherein this latent power, becoming vital through stern events, is repressing wrongs, redressing grievances, reforming abuses, and establishing justice.

This vital spirit in our life is difference of this Republic from all before it. Other republics had no religious truth as an eternal savor. They contained the seeds of their ruin. They failed. Everything except the eternal principle of love *will* fail. Democracies, empires, worldly wisdom, all will pass away. But the truth of Christ, strengthens and expands as the ages roll on. More we recognize it, more it controls our counsels, more it purifies to perpetuate, more it binds the parts into one grand harmonious whole. A nation built on such truth will stand the shock of domestic traitors and despots. When we debate the chances of life or death to the Republic, let not the fact be lost that other Republics had not God's word to direct, educate and control the people. Searching amid their ruins we find not the Bible their corner-stone. This poor man's blessing, this richest heritage to man, was unknown. The assurance of our perpetuity is the

intelligence of the people imbued deeply with the spirit of the gospel. Thus was our last election so sublime a spectacle. Did such freedom exist in England even, England would crumble. Mobs would be the rule, not the exception. England's government is good and strong for England's people, as the French government suits best the French nation, or the Maximilian rule may be best for Mexico's priest-ridden, superstitious, ignorant masses; yet for the Bible-reading *citizens* of America, only a representative republican government would be endured. For such, no sacrifice too great to maintain. Such a people would submit to only that freedom that the gospel truth makes free. This great truth is infusing its spirit into and moulding our national character, and giving us abiding hope and unswerving confidence in the existence of the Republic. The nation's gratitude must go out to-day in prayer and praise, that the people and their servants more devoutly recognize this growing power.

3. The next sign of a higher life is—*a truer knowledge of true liberty.*

Before this war our people were merging into reckless lawlessness, and they called *that* freedom. Laws were made to be disobeyed. Not one murderer in a hundred was ever convicted of his crime. The people were slaves to licentiousness. The rulers were sycophants to popular applause. Liberty was rapidly losing restraints. But there is a change. Christianity is working through this upheaval of old errors, shaking from their foundations exotic false systems, and thus purifying and enlightening. Christianity, being so much more fully recognized as the *only* saving element, amid the tendencies to ruin, is teaching the nation that Liberty involves obligations, checks, directions,—that Liberty is a *means* to an *end*, hence the grandest opportunity to enable man, God-created, accountable MAN, to develop his being, perform his obligations to God, to his country, and to himself, and thus prepare for his eternal destiny. Self-government thus based and administered, becomes a blessing to humanity; and its

well-regulated liberty, the means to realize the highest hopes.

4. Another sign of promise is—*the less engrossment in things material.*

Groveling utility had almost subsidized public and private virtue,—was gnawing away our inner life. *Smartness* was progress. Physical improvements were the end of study and enterprise. But this sensualizing national character soon classed great machines and material growth with the products of mind unsanctified.

Excavations amid old ruins reveal wonders in mechanics and industry, but low order of civilization. So the true life of a people is not evinced by railroads, telegraphs, internal improvements, discoveries of mineral beds and oily earth-veins. Extended commerce has too plainly proved that its missions do not always bring peace. Even civilized nations witness unconcernedly the destruction of millions of private property by piratical corsairs. Strength and speed of craft, and extent of gains and diffusion of trade to all nationalities only whets national jealousy and enlarges the bore and range of piratical guns. So we must strengthen police force on land, else New York riots, and countless murders, and daring robberies will be the fruits of speed of travel and crafty intelligence. These means of wealth and greatness may be fruits of true progress, but they should not be gods to worship. They indicate *enterprise*, not necessarily, *growth* in the *true life* of a nation. Moral rectitude measures national character and stability, not chivalric admiration of accidental princes, or feudal proslavery lords. Our sycophancy and materialism are falling off amid the scourges of clashing errors and the earthquake shocks of contending hosts. We do not claim the necessity of such means to teach us religious duty, but we only accept the lessons of the terrible facts as causes for gratitude, because the claims of Christianity are subordinating and subsidizing for good the wide-spread materialism.

5. As a result of such growing vitality in religious duty among the masses, another sign of health is—*a superior class of public officials.*

These are not perfect, but more loyal and fixed in devotion to right. The last two or three years of legislation are glorious epochs in our national life. Our legal forms and public administration do not ignore, but *recognise the necessity of the living power of Christianity.* For years, what godless men sat in Congress! Grand exceptions who have battled alone for right amid the subservient tools of slavery and selfishness. The slang "ring" filled the seats from which the people appealed in vain. Dishonesty and infamy ruled. But a higher intelligence amongst the masses is electing and controling public rulers. When a national legislator publicly brands the ministry of Christ and dishonors Christian truth by a professed sickly devotion to it, the nation receives it with silent contempt, and his constituency give him the benefit of that silence by choosing a Christian gentleman in his place to make their laws. Infidelity of public men to religious truth sowed the wind for the people to reap the whirlwind. This terrible present harvesting is revealing the true standard of legislation; so, no longer, nor so much, do demagogues wrangle with bludgeons over slavery until their vain threats on that subject cost four-fifths of the public expense. Now better men are sought. Wealthy merchants, intelligent mechanics, Christian lawyers, men *of* the people and *from* them, who know their wants and integrity. The Christian intelligence of the people is our hope. *That* is growing and sending into power men of knowledge, culture, refined tastes, religious sensibilities, and Christian principle. If such events must whelm us, we had better have moping religionists in power than selfish thieves, keen, shrewd and legal. But low pot-house politicians have disgusted, or ought to disgust, the people. What conservators of human rights! They have long soiled the chairs of state, cast Justice from her throne, smothered her voice, and buried petitions for redress in the tomb of the Capulets. Never was there such rattling among

the dry bones of unprincipled demagogues as this civil war has produced. If, with such lessons, the people select *not* good men, adhere *not* to truth, insist *not* on obligations to be fulfilled, then our chastisements will have been in vain. Partisan, selfish, unprincipled blindness will continue to reign and the complicity of the people in the crimes of their rulers will make divine judgments destructive, and not chastening, and humbling, and purifying. Let the best men rule us. Their source may be from the lowliest, not from royalty. The fact of their greatness proves that nothing is regal and glorious but intellect sanctified and consecrated to to the cause of justice and humanity, for this is the cause of God.

6. One other sign of healthy character we mention: *less desire to extend public domain.*

Once conquest seemed our motto. The advocates of extension *then,* are the open and secret rebels *now.* But conquest means subverting, robbing, plundering. The fact that personal integrity was compromised in governmental sanction of wrong seemed lost upon the public conscience. Steal a dollar, and the courts sentence you to punishment, and justly; but steal a nation or millions from the public, and you are a hero,—covered with plaudits instead of chains. We were merging into this deadness to others' rights by enlarging our territory by conquest. Had not the war checked us, and religious principle fastened us upon the rock of justice, antiquaries might be searching for relics amid the ruins of Washington, Philadelphia, and New York, and new nationalities contending for existence over the wrecks of the old republic. It is a fact of all history, that those nations who forget God have perished.

Our own country has a destiny peculiar to itself. Its life, growth, influence, location are unique. God has a grand mission for us. Let us follow his designs in history, and not seek strange gods. Not liable to disturbance from foreign wars, situated three thousand miles from any strong powers, walled on the East and the West by the great Oceans, America, sitting in such spaciousness and safety between the seas,—

the mountain of law and liberty to the world—must, under God, have a grand and glorious mission. Isolated thus from other countries by nature, we can study our own character, throw off old evils, put on a new life, and, by our majestic watery belts, our iron-ribbed bands, and intelligent wiry nerves, we can bring all points of the domain to the great centre, and cause to diverge from the centre to all surrounding points, the safety of each citizen and make him a defender of the whole, because of his intelligent faith in the perpetuity of the nation that rules in the fear of God and with love to man.

In view, then, of these general signs of moral health in our national life,—submission to the Divine will in our trials, recognition of the Spirit of Christianity in law and administration, appreciation of liberty and its obligations, less grasping in worldliness, selection by a more intelligent people of higher-toned rulers from caucus to convention, from commissioner of schools to the chief executive, and less desire for conquest and greater study of our own destiny under Providence—all these cheering features now manifest and developing, constituting the true basis of growth and permanence, give great grounds for the people at large to show gratitude to God for the promise of a free and Christian nation.

II. *The next general reason for national gratitude is derived from God's special mercies during the last year.*

The moral forces elevating our national life prepare us to follow the President's Proclamation for this National Thanksgiving.

The nation is at rest so far as results are concerned. Majestic is the people's decision. Great battles, moral and physical, have they fought and won. The people are assured of a country. The armies are assured that they shall not return over the scenes of their trials and triumphs with the flag trailing in dishonor. But when they come, the advent home will be as victors, and on their hearts, the assurance *of a nation restored in full integrity.* Imagine, if possible, an old soldier's

joy, when long fighting for principle, and the purpose gained, he returns to be enfolded in the Republic's gratitude.

But we have safely passed the rapids of our struggle: Our tried pilot is still true and re-elected to guide us clean through the onward surging channel. In view of our deliverances, our moral growth, our steadfast adherence to the cause of humanity, our comprehension of the forces developing to bless the world,—in view of God's special favors to chasten and save us during the past year, let us take up the President's thankful note, and start it rippling heavenward as our offering to the MOST HOLY ONE.

1. *"It has pleased Almighty God to prolong our national life another year, defending us with his guardian care against unfriendly designs from abroad."*

Yes, we are still at peace with foreign powers. Let us not swaggeringly boast to other nations: "I am holier than thou." Yet we can now, for the first time, call ourselves Republican Democrats. Never before could we face the world as a Republican Government, "securing equal liberty to all founded on the rights of man." When the eloquent Choate called the declarations of our independence, "glittering generalities," he was right, so far as our efforts and policy were concerned, to substantiate those declarations to a large portion of the American people now fighting so bravely in our armies. The "inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" were "sounding brass" to the negro. Now our ægis bears a different policy. The cap of liberty rests not now on the head of a personal despotism. Once the frontlet of a freeman's glory was to catch fugitive slaves. This war is substantiating the great truths uttered by Jefferson. The avowed policy, purchased by the blood of three hundred thousand patriots, and sustained by the voice of enfranchised Americans, is to give—*equality before the law*, to all within our borders,—the European, the African, the Asiatic, the American. This policy is hostile to other governments—at war with their principles. With such antagonistic policies our practice would be war,

war, war, did not an allwise Providence shield the outgrowth of the principles on which hangs Christ's kingdom in this world. Yet foreign despots have schemed, prayed, labored for our ruin, conspired with slave-hordes south to embroil us in ignoble quarrels, to compromise our national honor, to make us practice savagery upon rebel war-prisoners in retaliation for their deliberate starving of ours in rebel "HELLS," and thus reduce us to an equal barbarous cruelty with them, so the world could demand cessation of hostilities on grounds of humanity, and hence divide and destroy us. In the series of grievances, France has defied successfully the Monroe Doctrine. An Austrian exotic has been planted in Mexico. We are still unready to weed our American garden of foreign plants. England has built fleets for pirates to plunder, sink, burn, destroy our legitimate trade on the ocean, given refuge to raiders to sack our towns and rob our citizens along the Canadian borders. Neutral laws become magazines of interference. Neutrality at Nova Scotia with the Chesapeake is neutralized at Bermuda, in the case of the Roanoke. Hence, laws enacted at times for protection, under tyrants become instruments of tyranny. John Bull has been playing blindman's buff 'mid international law books, since South Carolina's secession enabled him to proclaim with great self satisfaction, "the Union gone forever." "Perfide Albion," "a nation of hucksters,"—Are *these* the true stamps for her banners? Strange, so great a nation, with same language and religion with us, should hold cotton more valuable than the souls of four millions of negroes. Henry the VIII. forbade the people to read the Scriptures, but extended the privilege to the merchants and the nobility. Wealth and rank measured the necessity of spiritual life. The old king's spirit seems abroad to day among rebels South and their friends North, and tyrants every where.

It is the prerogative of legalized, manufactured nobility, that gives the whole kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland to a few landholders. The masses must live landless and homeless, and their children forever, without they flee to

America. Here they can have a home in fee-simple. There shiploads of gold could not secure to the industrious the pleasure parks of the nobles, but England's primogeniture laws must sustain and transmit an aristocracy of idleness. So in other countries not republican. Monarchy leagues with our domestic traitors to destroy us, that the people may be footballs of the slave-lords.

The ignorance of foreigners respecting this country and its institutions is truly lamentable. Their ignorance of the character of our struggle is almost disgusting to a live patriot. It is the safety of absolutism to spread errors concerning republicanism. Some foreign despots profess for us friendship, but their friendship for us is only enmity for some other despot opposed to us. This is a necessity from the nature of the governments, so hostile are the principles of each. But some noble spirits have thoroughly understood us. As they rise to understand us, they wonder why England and America do not stand together for a free and Christian Commonwealth, for the brotherhood of nations based on the Gospel of Christ. In view of the facts in the constitution of governments and the studied devices to destroy us, our freedom from foreign wars to give freedom to ourselves in this conflict, is truly a marvel, and a source of the most devout gratitude to the Disposer of men and nations.

We have giants ruling our affairs, and don't know it, because we are passing with them through the storm. SEWARD always has his eye on the out-look in the watch-tower of diplomacy, scanning the legislative assemblies, peace conferences, counsels, international archives hived up in foreign bureaus, and watching the internal machinery of each nation on the globe,—always conserving human freedom when he advocates our country's cause. Throughout the world the dogs of war have pointed their game ready to pounce upon the supposed carcass of American Liberty. But still we are at peace with all the world. Our Ship of State has gone through all international channels, and preserved a most

accurate log-book of observations to eventually sift and systematize in the Congress of nations.

So CHASE in Finance as SEWARD in State Department, has called the people's wealth from their industry and genius to support the nation amid the clash of such mighty events. The soldier, sailor and citizen have passed their earnings over to the Government as their trustee, so that, as we owe our national debt to ourselves, the greater the debt the more firm our Government, for each man, with even fifty dollars of public bonds, is a stockholder in the nation's stability. Likewise, STANTON in the War Department, has most wisely and matchlessly planned to gain such lustre for our arms, to place such commanders to lead our hosts, to watch the movements and reward the merits of each squadron over the land, and to make all combine to deal such deadly blows to the black fortress of Human Bondage. Again, WELLES has swelled the naval fleets until scores of most formidable navies might come from the death-clasping blockade and the iron convoys of ships of commerce and treasure. Other powers rejoiced to learn rebellion had destroyed the lights along our coast. But the once darkened coast-range now sends forth salutations to the sea-farer and to peaceful commerce, from the Delaware Capes to the Rio Grande. Has there been progress? "No," say jealous nations. "Tell it to the marines," says Sherman; they will believe it. These men are giants. Posterity will fully comprehend the gigantic folios of their labors and reward the patiotism that prompts the tasks. Once nations might have interfered, now they dare not. We are too strong on land and sea. A patriot's heart must swell with pride, both at our strength and magnanimity to our foes, under the most stinging insults. But our cause demands Christian forbearance. In view, however, of the hostile principles, discordant jealousies, flagrant wrongs inflicted; the fact that we are at peace with all the world, except our domestic foes, at the close of the fourth year of the mightiest war known in time, is cause of the most devout thanksgiving to Him who ruleth among the nations to His own glory.

2. *The President continues—"And vouchsafing to us in his mercy many and signal victories over the enemy, who is of our own household."*

In 1776, we fought for political liberty. We are now contending for civil freedom. Seven years we fought in the first war for Independence. We are only in the fourth year of the second war for the same. Four years ago every slave State but the border ones that feared military ruin, refused to acknowledge a President constitutionally elected. Less than three and a half years since they all refused to give help to the Government to resist an assault upon its life. With no army, navy, nor money, the CAUSE was the *strength* of the Republic. Legitimate power proclaimed its order, awaiting the movements of patriotism to enforce obedience. President Lincoln, ignored as he was in 1860, throughout nearly all slave domain, was re-elected in 1864, and voted for in all the rebel States. Our fathers' time-honored franchise was expelled for ever in 1861—so secessionists claimed—yet exercised in every State in 1864. Three reconquered capitals had open polls—Baton Rouge, Little Rock, and Nashville. This is progress—"signal victory over the enemy, who is of our own household." Our progress, cleaving the enemy's stolen territory, and the vast sweep of our victories, would amaze, were we not in the midst of the scenes, witnessing their origin, progress and results. Again, so impatient of delay are we at times, and so easily disheartened by reverse of our arms, we feel the sting of wounded conscious strength when discomfiture comes, and magnify it beyond the fact. Such temporary weaknesses repress gratitude due for the most signal achievements for national life.

There is something grand and majestic in the triumphant march of the great army. The measured tramp of long lines of equipped soldiery, their glittering bayonets, clattering sabres, streaming banners, bugle peals, the immense trains of commissary stores, the strength-inspiring artillery, the speed-inspiring cavalry, and the every where supporting infantry—all moving with irresistible power into an ene-

my's domain to crush rebellion, to establish authority, to restore the Republic to greatness, to call as a result millions from bondage to freedom, to give religion her hopes, and liberty her asylum—such a display of organized power, designed for the highest ends of humanity in conquering a righteous peace, inspires the noblest thoughts and impulses of our manhood.

Our restraints have been great, yet the progress of the cause to ultimate victory has never faltered. The sword has clashed through hordes of infamous prejudices, opening an avenue to free thought and action. The most solid victories have followed temporary discomfitures. Beside the God of battles, to whom shall the nation do homage? To whom shall they pour out their hearts and their treasures for fidelity and noble sacrifice? Let me answer by an illustration. Admiral Ruyter, of the Dutch Republic always followed the flag of his country. When Spain once called upon Holland for assistance, Ruyter was deputed by his Government to perform a dangerous mission. He expressed himself against the sufficiency of the means to gain the end. A brother officer replied: "After having given hitherto so many proofs of invincible intrepidity, have you become timid?" Ruyter repelled the charge, saying, "He would engage a hostile fleet with a single vessel if ordered." "What!" said the officer, "engage a fleet with a single vessel?"" "Yes, sir!" replied the hero; "because I will always be ready to expose my life every where whenever the Republic is willing to expose its flag." Willingness to expose life under the folds of the flag wherever ordered to be waved, has been the moving principle and habitual practice of the Union soldier. *That* confidence in the cause, *that* love for the flag, *that* hatred of wrong, *that* love of peace —all these traits of the Union soldier—these have planted the ligitimate authority of our Government in every State; given the right of constitutional suffrage in every State; sown the seeds of liberty in every State; carried the altar-fires of Bunker Hill, Sartoga, and Yorktown, into every State; infused a world-wide, heaven-born patriotism into the

darkened land of slavery; partially dispelled the boasted egotism of a privileged class, and assured them with *legal leniency* that their false and arrogant claims have made States abhor each other that otherwise would have mingled like kindred drops into one. The American soldier has been always ready to expose his life "every where, whenever the Republic was willing to expose her flag," hence the victories he achieved, the lessons he taught; not only the reality of that grand inspired truth, "That God hath made of one blood all nations of men," but that this Republican Government, which falls with such infinite lightness upon the people in times of peace, is the strongest and most irresistible in times of war. Has the soldier done well the work entrusted him by the loyal households of the nation? Let the battle-roll of the last year tell. Let the countless graves, making sacred Southern soil with Northern heroes tell. Let the begrimed and bullet-riddled battle-flags tell. Let the unbounded generosity of the people to support the soldiery with word and deed tell. Let the millions of long crushed souls tell, who, with straining eyes and outstretched necks, have long been looking and waiting for the sunrise of a better life. Let the prayers tell, that to-day ascend in incense clouds to the Eternal Throne from forts, battle-fields, encampments, hospitals, war-vessels, merchant ships, coasting craft, marts of trade, homes of industry and peace, homes of sorrow and sacrifice. Let all these, with the tears and blood of the faithful and the fallen, be a great cloud of witnesses to the fidelity of the Union soldier to his country, to her flag, and to the cause of AMERICAN LIBERTY. With such causes for a Nation's gratitude to flow from its great heart, let the word "*failure*" blister the lips of the croaker or the political malignant as *he* sees nothing in respect to our country for which we should give God thanks in His courts to-day. But grateful praise will rise, not only from all the loyal North, but also from the Bethels established by our soldiers in all the chief Southern cities, and thousand other places they have taken, on the majestic river-highways they have gained, along the great mountain chains in whose

fastnesses they recruit, over the vast territory they have seized to irrevocably possess, along the extended seaboard the sailors have helped them conquer to defend—from all these, won by the hardship, endurance, courage, and daring of a hundred battles, THE NATION'S GRATITUDE will speak in such tones that the world's crushed masses will hear and join in our thanksgiving to God.

3. "*It has also pleased our Heavenly Father to favor as well our citizens in their homes as our soldiers in the camps, and our sailors on the seas with universal health.*"

How complete, systematic, extended, and salutary has become the Medical Department of the nation! The highest kill has taxed its energies to establish and perfect the sanitary system at work among our land and naval forces. No epidemic has scourge-like scarcely touched our ranks, encamped as so many have been in malarial regions. Systems of health-preserving and health-restoring have checked the ravages of disease, taken the wounded from the trenches, picked up the way-side worn out one, and thrown over all the mantle of Christian benevolence unknown in previous warfare. No other army ever had brigades of Samaritans to follow them to bless and Christianize.

The great Commissions look with Argus-eyes, and reach forth with Brierian hands after the soldier's personal fitness for his mission. "Aid Societies" of village, town, city, church, and household, co-operate. All these agencies are the lakes and rivers and rills that form the grand Niagara of our benevolence, making it the wonder of the world. As the one reflects the God of Nature in such might and majesty, the other mirrors forth the God of all grace to the myriads suffering for a noble cause. Never were the poor better cared for—never so little suffering among all classes. Benevolence never more available.

Men grumble against frauds so rife. But war always brings out gigantic scoundrels, yet what time ever developed such gigantic benefactors? Corruption may be one concomitant of the clashing of truth and error, for Achans

exist in all camps. Gold wedges are concealed for private use. But better submit to few reveling in stolen livery for a time, than to be forever harassed, impoverished and enslaved like the disenfranchised millions of other lands. In one scale of the balance of justice may be found a few defaulters, but in the other are the hosts of God's children reaching forth for free homes in order to enjoy God's birthrights in this free Commonwealth. In time, these corrupt craters will be uncapped. Injustice will be exposed and redressed. The masses will rest under their own vine. Hence, emboldened by the prophecies of righteous issues, the people will be faithful to the armies and will send forth streams of benevolence to give them health and heart in the day of battle.

4. "*He has largely augmented our free populatiou by immigration and emancipation.*"

First, by *immigration.* No year in history reveals so great per cent of foreigners to our shores. Why *not* come here? They are all children of a common Father. No other land is the refuge of the world's oppressed, priest-ridden slave-ridden masses. Sometimes we scarcely realize we are Americans. Ireland and Germany, as well as Africa are in our midst. Over twenty nationalities in New York City. But let them come; they surge westward like a tide-wave, and, spreading out over that vast territory, they soon become naturalized, Americanized, and Christianized. Their tongue is absorbed by the English; their religion, eventually by the Christian; their best traits of character appropriated for building up strong and flexible republican life. Thus the combined elements of language, religion and the law will form the conglomerate stone in the monument of our nation's greatness. To build this memorial to liberty and love is the philanthropist's work. Scholarship, statesmanship, and Christian principle must unite for the work. Let us then give them our salutations to their new home. Their fidelity to the Republic and our duty to God's humblest children, will be conditioned upon the power of the truth as it is in

Christ. The Bible will elevate and naturalize them, and bring Heaven's smiles upon *their* asylum—upon *our* free home.

Again, our free population has been increased by *emancipation.* The prop of rebellion fell when President Lincoln engraved his name on January 1st, 1863. Slaves became warriors; they have welcomed with unflinching courage the baptism of blood to redeem their race. Three years since, we viewed the negro in the light of the dark ages. Kill one then, and you found refuge in his market value, to the eternal shame of a Christian people. Deliberately repeat the offence now, and you may with felons work at the Dry Tortugas. We welcome these freedmen as friends, Unionists, and brave soldiers. They are all these. They are true friends. Many a soldier has dropped his prejudice to the negro in Virginia swamps when escaping from the starving, filthy, deadly dungeons of Libby Prison and the savage treatment of Belle Island; others, in Georgia jungles and crocodile swampy thickets, when eluding blood-hounds and excrutiating deaths; others, on the battle-field where they coolly, daringly, nobly welcomed death to torturing slavery. Never does the negro betray the Union soldier. He harbors and feeds him by day and pilots him northward by night, stealthily winding along rivers and through swamps to the Union lines. His heart has been the depot of the underground railroad, the necessity of which revealed the blackness and infamy of the Federal Slave Code when the Fugitive Law, from its inhumanity, swelled the tide of anti-slavery sentiment.

We are too *fastidious* about equality; but what equality? *Equality before God and the law.* Not social equality; that is impossible. Not intellectual equality; that is impossible. Some blacks are the superiors of some whites. In the forest of humanity, some are underbrush, some thornstocks, some dwarf trees, some graceful trees, while some tower like the giant oaks above their fellows. Intellect will be recognized when possessed, if free to be developed. Neither do we mean religious equality; that is impossible. Some men will be nines in the arithmetic of life, whether among blacks or

whites, while others will be only cyphers—simply will fill a place. Because God so ordered the grades of mind that some will always help others to power and ease, it does not follow that the negro should not enjoy equality before the law; political equality; a right to life, to liberty, to his own children, to the fruits of his own labor; the right to worship God in intelligence and freedom. Ages of enslavement have not crushed all talent out of the black man, but it has formed a prejudice, thick, hard, impenetrable as an iron-clad, which an army of martyrs fallen in a hundred bloody battles, is destroying. We are also too inquisitive about what will become of them. That question belongs to their Creator. He will take care of them. We have no more right to inquire thus concerning the black than the white. That question will answer itself. Our revolution has gone forward none too slowly, that the people may be schooled to accept God's decision. Their intelligence, desire for freedom, love for the Union, devotion to our soldiers, ability for endurance and willing acceptance of the daring and hardships of the army, will vindicate their right to life and liberty, and carve for them a place in history, notwithstanding the vices that slavery has so long infused into their very being. Let Providence answer that question with the blacks as with the millions from the Old World to our shores.

But we have men who oppose the negro's emancipation. They would rather hear the slave-driver's whip over coffles of human chattels. Instead of the songs of Liberty that returning New Year's days will ever evoke from myriads of glad hearts in memorial of emancipation, they would rather hear the sepulchral cry of the ancient warning—

"Room for the leper, room!"

One class of opponents are *political traders*. They hate the negro as badly as the Government that protects them. Impervious to patriotism, they are ever trumpeting their immaculate virtues. Low politicians by trade, they will hide the negro from their eyes with a tin six-pence, and then pass out the worthless coin as their donation to the soldiers' Thanks-

giving dinner. They love Liberty, but league with traitors to organize the most fiendish and diabolical conspiracies to murder loyalists, free rebel prisoners, and destroy the Government. They cry peace at noonday but drill with bloody weapons at midnight to execute their hellish schemes.

A second class of opponents are *merchant traders.* They oppose emancipation because they sold branding irons, bloodhounds, shackles, whips, and hand-cuffs to Southern traitors, before the war; and some risk blockade running to day. Their occupation, however, is nearly gone. Many of them mingle with the first class, cowardly plotting against their country in a neighboring province, growl at the efforts of the Nation to save itself; cry, the war a "failure," and snap and snarl for "peace! peace!"

There is one more prominent class of opponents to emancipated freemen. They are an extremely moral, sensitive, respectable class of *conservatives.* They dislike agitation; they love quiet. They never flinch under outrages, for they never concern themselves about the sufferings of others. They are convulsed like the English with horror about the war. They see no grounds for thanksgiving, but wear garments of sackcloth and ashes. They may be wealthy and highly cultivated and refined, but they are gilded all over with complicity in this infamous crime of slavery that is now demanding hecatombs of our noblest young men as the condition of its existence These men also wonder that negroes want their freedom, want to read, want their own wives, want their children, want the proceeds of their hard industry. They have traveled among planters, been entertained by Southern gentlemen, whose polish in *their* eyes purges them of treason. They believe slavery must be a benign institution, divine in its origin, perhaps a political evil. Upon the whole, they think the slaves were much better off in slavery than the low order of whites in the free States. Thank God this divine retribution for this sin is stripping these men of this putrefying enamel that so long blazoned a false conservative respectability with the semblance of truth. Such men block up the wheels of pro-

gress, and roll themselves up in the cerements of the dead past like Egyptian mummies, until they forget whether they are living in Pharaoh's time or in the middle of the Nineteenth century. But thanks to the Great Searcher of a nation's heart for his goodness, He found America as Paul found Athens—"a city full of idols," but her crime greater when compared with the light enjoyed. This war, however, has dealt hits to this great idol,—Human Bondage,—as if by the hand of the unknown God. Reeking with the blood of millions of the innocent, it is now reeling to its destructive fall. The sacrifices of the heart's highest claims, the future safety of the Republic, and the advancing genius of the age, demand complete emancipation, leaving the settlement of the great questions flowing therefrom to the Spirit of Christianity and to the God who made of one blood all nations of men.

5. "*While he has opened to us new sources of wealth, and has crowned the labor of our working men in every department of industry with abundant reward.*"

The war has revealed our wealth, has taxed genius to discover that wealth, has honored and ennobled labor, has joined smirched and hardened hands with the bare palm of true manhood. Gloved effeminacy shrinks from free labor, strikes for an aristocracy of idleness, and will soon be shelved in history as a relict of a blind past.

That such a struggle *can* exist for national salvation without the people feeling the pressure almost unbearable, is truly marvelous. But what is lost in one source, is gained in another. If taxes are great, so is labor more costly. If foreign supplies are cut off, necessity unfolds untold treasures at home. So versatile is utility in the American character, that everything it touches turns to some purpose. When our army take a rebel city, as Atlanta, and find it deserted, soon all the appliances of industrial life are at work to feed the poor and pursue the foe. While regiments rushed to the front, vast throngs of pioneers settled in the far West. What changes have been wrought to encourage freemen! Four years since adventurers dared scarcely to travel the solitary Indian trail,

where now civilization breathes through immense thorough fares strung with cities, villages, schools, churches, judicial seats, printing presses,—the life-breath of fifty thousand inhabitants, whose application for admittance into the Union made Nevada the thirty-sixth Star in the sky of Liberty. As with the stroke of the enchanter's wand, the slopes of the rugged Sierra, and the cheerless Wasatch, spurring out from the Rocky Mountains, have become so populous, yielding up untold stores of long hidden wealth—iron, silver, and gold. This young State comes into the Union free, comes with a loyal grasp. She wants the protection of the central power. The lion might threaten her prosperity were she not a wheel within a wheel. She comes more peacefully than California came with her walls of gold. She comes more peacefully than Kansas, whose garments were rolled in martyrs' blood. She comes during this mighty civil war, peacefully, cheerfully, submissively, free. Other States are springing into representation. God is thus enlarging, enriching, strengthening, and elevating. His divine leadings point to this as a great free Commonwealth, projecting itself upon the future as the guardian of the civil and religious rights of his free and grateful people.

6. Finally the President says: "*Moreover he has been pleased to animate and inspire our minds and hearts with fortitude, courage and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war into which we have been brought by our adherence as a nation to the cause of freedom and humanity, and to afford to us reasonable hopes of an ultimate and happy deliverance from all our dangers and afflictions.*"

The rebels are right or we are. Victory or extermination is their watchword. They or we must conquer. Wars for humanity are righteous and must prevail. If the rebels will go down with the wreck their fathers claimed was unsafe, their death-gripping guerrilla spirit must die with the cause that begets it.

The American people are in earnest. Their fortitude has toughened like the veteran soldier. They quail not before

despots' frowns, nor flinch from their darts of diplomacy. The late election decides their purpose. The Constitution supreme, the laws at all hazards, armed resistance crushed by the sternest measures, armed rising against a popular vote in self-government destroyed forever; slavery abolished, the Union restored, peace and good will. This programme unfulfilled, this Union is a name—the home of slaves; but fulfilled, it is a realty, a union of faith, interests, liberty, love. One of Buchanan's Cabinet in early '61 wrote Lord Lindsey, —"We are tumbling in pieces fast." But the "fortitude, courage, and resolution sufficient for the great trial of civil war," into which he helped plunge us, are cementing those States with devotion to principle and christian patriotism. Had not the nation this spirit for which the President calls us to be thankful, our past sacrifices would be useless, our latent power in christian intelligence, a vain boast; and while resting in supposed safety, we would be living on slumbering coal beds, liable at any time to be enveloped and consumed by the flames bursting forth.

This spirit of the Government to vindicate the majesty of law does not block up the way to peace. It does not fill the gap between the rebels and loyalists with a bitter and a revengeful spirit. We cannot afford to be savages because the rebels treat our prisoners with such unparalleled cruelty. No nation was ever more lenient to its traitors. That spirit prevails throughout our nation. We know the truth from observation and conviction, but there is the living and lasting testimony of an Englishman, who spoke in New York just after election. "I would too that the English people could witness as I witness the spirit of humanity which retains its power over all the passions of civil war, notwithstanding the greatest provocations; and the absence which has most forcibly struck me during my residence here, of any blood-thirsty sentiment or any feeling of malignant hatred towards those who are now your antagonists in a civil war, but whom, when they shall have submitted to the law, you will again eagerly welcome as fellow-citizens, and receive back into the full communion of the free. Many a prejudice, many an

error would be dispelled. many a harsh judgment would be cancelled, many a bitter word recalled, if only my countrymen could behold with their own eyes what I have beheld and now behold."

The spirit that prompts such words of soberness and truth will enable Professor Smith, when he returns to Oxford University, in England, to enlighten the English people upon the character of a people of whom they either in reality know but little or are designedly ignorant.

The President's words are further illustrated in the fact of his own re-election by so overwhelming a majority. The people endorse the policy of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the tried, the true, the patriotic, the sterling, the honest man. He has guided the ship of State with such stern, inflexible purpose, with such sleepless energy, with such ability, wisdom, and firmness, aided by the ablest and most earnest men of the nation, whom he has called around him, that his name will be carved in our history, and sent forward upon the future as one of the most remarkable men of the age. Never inflated by position, but humbled by the Nation's confidence, he keeps his purpose single to harmony exacted from justice to all. The people abide in the pure decisions of his great and honest heart. He has words of wisdom for his great counsellors in national affairs, and turns from the public burden and sends words of sympathy to the Boston mother, whose five sons she has offered upon her country's altar. Will not a President be true to the people whose mothers thus sacrifice for the country with a heroism truly sublime? God give the bereaved grace to endure the loss of the brave and immortal dead. Eulogy is vain. Their lives were short, but historic with events that will weigh for truth in eternal glory. Big are those lives with events, whose occurrence would electrify the millions were they not actors in the passing scenes. States, always slave, wheeling rapidly into the line of freedom in the march of destiny. Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, Kentucky, tried by fire and blood, are drifting into the current of emancipation. Maryland, glorious Maryland! free Maryland! Her peals for

freedom, November 1, 1864, were slavery's death-knell. The fruits of this moral victory will be complete when the national belfrey rings out new music to the slave-ridden millions, lifting their hearts heavenward in gratitude, that the God of Redemption has come.

My dear friends and fellow soldiers: We read in ancient story that when the walls of the temple were going up, the work was carried forward with fear and trembling. Great difficulties arose, yet success crowned their efforts. Jerusalem and her temple were devoted to God in a peculiar manner. Over all gateways and threshholds were written—"Holiness to the Lord;" and the whole ceremony closed with a grand thanksgiving unto the Most High. We are building the temple of our Liberty. Her foundations were laid in faith, and tears and prayers and blood. Our soldiers are the builders. The living glory of God's word is the sacred cement to unite the parts. Ringing in home-hearts are the words of a fallen builder—"I have fought for the right, mother; God bless the flag." This Union temple has become a tender reality. Tears have marked our trembling course; yet righteous fidelity gives promise. Then let us dedicate anew our nation to the Lord, and offer thanksgiving unto the God of our salvation:—

"For sure the right will triumph;
For sure, be justice done
As years roll on, and ages
Grow old beneath the sun,

"Soon may loud thrilling music,
Float over dale and lea;
The deep, glad voice of millions
In songs of jubilee.

"When slavery is dying
And Rebellion is no more,
And the dear old flag is flying
In peace from shore to shore.'

In view, then, of such promises in national character; such mercies in the struggling present; such prospects in national destiny; such manifold grounds for national gratitude to God for inspiring our people with such hopes for

the Union, baptized in blood but redeemed in peace, then let us—

"Hurrah for the Union! majestic and strong,
She confronts the Rebellion, represses the wrong;
Though bleeding, she rises; though tearful, she sings;
And freedom and love to the down-trodden brings.

"Hurrah for the Union! her beautiful eye
Through the fold of the cloud doth a vision espy;
The hosts, now ensanguined, in harmony meet,
And freedom avows her dominion complete.

"Hurrah for the Union! her star yet ascends;
The light of her glory more brilliant extends;
Though fearful the tempest, the thunderbolt red;
The rainbow of Hope still encircles her head."

"Hurrah for the Union! the blood of the brave
Is flowing in torrents the Union to save;
But the deeds of her heroes, the clarion of fame,
Triumphant, to ages unborn shall proclaim.

"Hurrah for the Union! our hearts round her cling,
And to her salvation we joyfully bring
Our arms and our honor; our gold and our faith;
And to God ever cry: GIVE US UNION OR DEATH!"

"Fling out the starry banner, then,
On to the stormy field again;
Shout, shout aloud the battle song;
Ye cannon, thunder it along,
Till treason's bloody flag is rent.
* * * * *
The sword into the plow-share bent,
And all men cry, GOD BLESS THE UNION!"